



Center for Army Leadership

Technical Report 2011-1

**2010 CENTER FOR ARMY LEADERSHIP  
ANNUAL SURVEY OF ARMY LEADERSHIP (CASAL):  
VOLUME 1, EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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**May 2011**

# The Center for Army Leadership

An Organization of Leader Development and Education, U.S. Army Combined  
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14. ABSTRACT This report summarizes the main survey findings of CAL Technical Report 2011-1 Volume 2 organized in 4 main sections: quality of leadership, contribution of actions and character to leadership, effects of climate and situational factors on leadership, and quality of leader development. Each section begins with a visual scorecard and concludes with recommendations (except the first section on the quality of leadership). Leadership quality continues to be a strength and most of the Leadership Requirements Model competencies and attributes are effectively demonstrated. A notable and consistent exception is the <i>Develops Others</i> competency. While over three fourths of leaders are confident that their unit can perform its mission, over one half also report that their unit wastes time and energy on unproductive tasks, and only 38% agree that the Army is headed in the right direction to prepare for future challenges. About 20% of superiors are viewed as demonstrating patterns of negative or toxic behavior. Turnover intention levels appear adequate with 66% planning to stay in the Army until retirement eligible. The quality of leader development is mixed. Issues remain regarding lack of support for leader development at the unit level and perceived lack of impact from Professional Military Education (PME) courses.					
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The main findings described in this report are:

- Army leaders report that on average 64% (ranging from a low of 56% for Jr. NCOs and a high of 70% for Sr. NCOs) of leaders in their unit or organization are effective—this is a slight (2%) increase from 2009.
- Half (55%) of leaders at CONUS locations report high morale, which is higher than those in Afghanistan (43%) or Iraq (48%). In comparison to findings from 2009, the percentage of deployed leaders reporting high or very high morale has increased in Iraq (+7%), but decreased in Afghanistan (-4%).
- Only 38% (no change from 2006) agreed that, “The Army is headed in the right direction to prepare for the challenges of the next 10 years.” The number one explanation was a perception of a “lack of discipline” or that the “Army is too soft.” While 74% of Jr. NCOs selected lack of discipline, only 35% of company grade officers did. TOE unit members selected lack of discipline (~70%) more often than TDA (~55%) unit members. This item was a follow-on to qualitative feedback obtained in 2006 indicating issues of discipline and respect not being instilled in new recruits and lower entrance standards (e.g., physical fitness).
- Over 40% agreed that, “The Army no longer demonstrates that it is committed to me as much as it expects me to be committed.” This item was indicative of command climate and intention to stay in the Army.
- About one-fourth (24%) of Army leaders believe that honest mistakes are held against them in their unit/organization. Nearly one-third (30%) believe that their unit/organization promotes a zero-defect mentality.
- About one in five Army leaders report that their immediate superior demonstrates toxic leadership behavior. Four out of five Army leaders (83%) report observing a leader who demonstrates toxic leadership behavior in the past year. However, almost all (97%) also observed an extraordinary leader in the past year.
- *Develops Others* continues to be the lowest rated core competency across all levels. Less than two-thirds of Army leaders are rated as effective at developing their subordinates (61%) and at creating or identifying opportunities for leader development (59%). Institutional courses/schools are not seen as effective in preparing leaders to develop their subordinates.
- The percentage of Army leaders who report that their unit/organization places a high priority on leader development is at an *all time low of 46%* (compared to 53% in 2009 and 55% in 2008); only 57% of Army leaders report that they have time to carry out the duties and responsibilities for developing subordinates, down from 63% in 2009.

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## **CASAL PURPOSE<sup>1</sup>**

The CAL Annual Survey of Army Leadership (CASAL) assesses and tracks trends (since 2005) in Army leader attitudes of leader development, the quality of leadership, and the contribution of leadership to mission accomplishment. CASAL provides research guidance for policy decisions and program development. CASAL is an authoritative source because a rigorous scientific approach is used for survey development, data collection, and data analysis including a large random representative sample and high precision. Additionally, findings are calibrated with other Army research.

To track trends and identify patterns, many survey items from past years have been used without change during each administration of the survey. Other items have been dropped, added, or modified in order to balance survey size and respondent fatigue/time required, with the need to cover a wide range of topical leadership issues. In part, this is done to ensure that the survey assesses current Army issues. Data are collected online during November through December of 2010 from a representative sample of over 22,000 Regular Army, Army Reserve, and Army National Guard officers (2LT to COL), warrant officers (WO1 to CW5), and noncommissioned officers (SGT to CSM). Approximately, 22,500 Army leaders participated, with a response rate of 16.1%. This participation provides an overall sampling error of approximately +/- 0.6%. Essentially, this means that 95 times out of 100 the percentage reported will be within 1% of the true percentage (of perceptions).

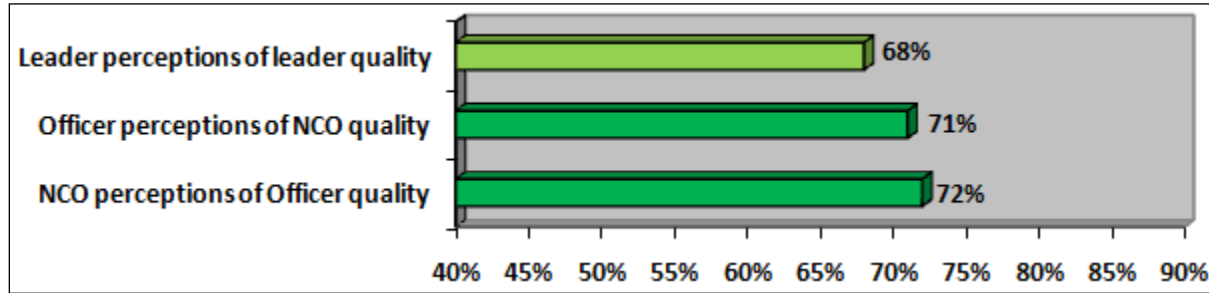
Responses are both quantitative (e.g., select a response) and qualitative (e.g., type a brief answer). Over 100 items covered topics on the quality of leadership and leader development. This summary is organized in 4 main sections: quality of leadership, contribution of actions and character to leadership, effects of climate and situational factors on leadership, and quality of leader development. Each section begins with a visual scorecard and concludes with recommendations (except the first section on the quality of leadership).<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This document is a summary of the Volume 2 Main Findings CAL Technical Report 2011-1. In addition to the main findings report, more in-depth analyses and recommendations are offered in topical reports on education (CAL Technical Report 2011-2), toxic leadership and command climate (CAL Technical Report 2011-3), and Department of Army civilians (CAL Technical Report 2011-4).

<sup>2</sup> Survey results represent subjective perceptions and not test results of knowledge and skills. The data are important because perceptions affect behavior, and ultimately, mission accomplishment. Percentages denote favorability unless otherwise stated.

## QUALITY OF LEADERSHIP



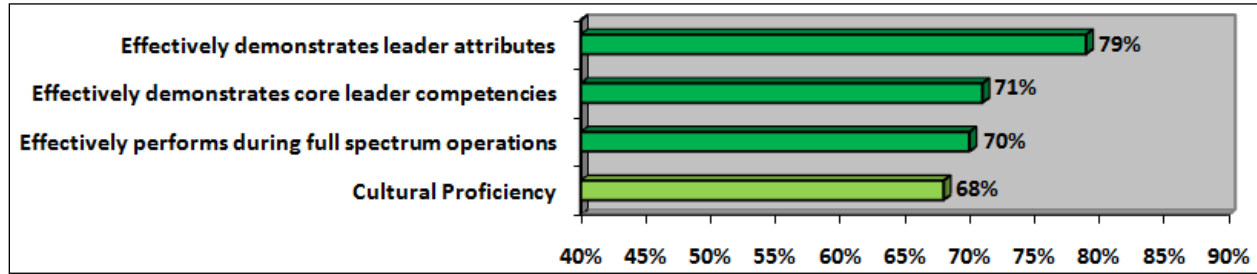
The scorecard shows that the quality of leadership is seen as favorable (i.e., favorability on related items consistently exceeds 66%). Without defining effectiveness, Army leaders were asked to estimate the percentage of effective leaders in their unit or organization. The average was up 2% from 2009 to 63% (*Median* = 70%). Another way to examine the quality of Army leadership beyond broad ratings of leader effectiveness is to evaluate Army leaders' performance. About 73% of Army officers believe that NCOs complete their work in a timely manner; and about 58% believe that NCOs complete their work with high quality, which exceeds standards. From the NCO point of view, about 64% of NCOs believe that officers complete their work in a timely manner, and 55% believe that officers' work exceeds standards.

The percentage of Army leaders not deployed who rate their subordinates and peers as effective leaders (79% and 75%, respectively) is comparable to the percentages for leaders who are deployed to S.W. Asia (79% and 72%, respectively) rating subordinates and peers as effective or very effective. However, as has been observed in past years, the effectiveness of one's immediate superior as a leader is less often viewed similarly between the two settings (not deployed, 72%; deployed, 64%). These findings demonstrate a consistent trend: subordinate and peer effectiveness as leaders show minimal differences between deployed and non-deployed settings, though small differences in perceptions of effectiveness of superiors do exist. Subordinates may have higher expectations for the leadership that their superiors provide when they interact with superiors for extended periods and more is 'on the line' during deployed conditions.

Army leaders perceive their immediate superiors, particularly those who effectively deal with uncertainty (71%) and demonstrate resiliency (76%), as effective at getting results and accomplishing the mission. Similarly, there is a strong association between getting results and leaders who demonstrate effective adaptability ( $r = .76$ ) and resilience ( $r = .76$ ).



## CONTRIBUTION OF ACTIONS AND CHARACTER TO LEADERSHIP

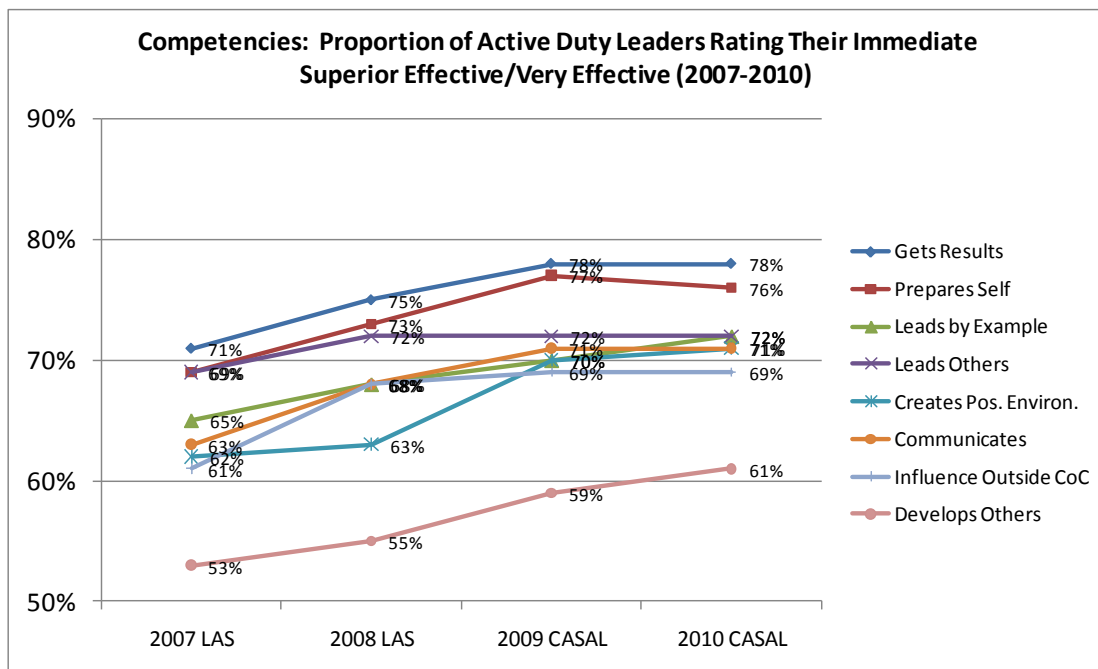


The scorecard shows that the contribution of actions and character to leadership is a strength.

### ***Leadership Requirements Model***

The graph below displays subordinate ratings of their immediate superior's effectiveness at demonstrating the core leader competencies, as defined in FM 6-22. This figure shows a slow, but steady improvement of 7% since 2007; however, the growth appears to have plateaued in 2009. In fact, only *Leads by Example* and *Develops Others* increased from last year.

### ***Comparison of Leader Effectiveness in demonstrating the Core Leader Competencies from 2007 to 2010.***



CASAL findings indicate that the leaders who are seen as the ‘best’ effectively demonstrate the competencies and attributes. This is important because it means Army leaders see these competencies and attributes as important. If this was not the case, then it would suggest that the Leadership Requirements Model was deficient and an immediate need to revise the model. *Leads by Example*, *Leads Others*, and *Creates a Positive Environment* are the competencies that are most strongly related with leader effectiveness. On the attributes side, *Sound Judgment*, *Interpersonal Tact*, and *Innovation* display the strongest relationship to leader effectiveness. It is important to point out that the same competencies and attributes emerged as most important regardless of deployment status or location. As in past years, Army leaders more often rate their immediate superior as effective or very effective on the leader attributes compared to the core leader competencies. Between 73% and 83% of Army leaders, depending on their rank, rate their immediate superior as effective or very effective across all leader attributes and thus, Army leaders generally are perceived as effective in demonstrating all leader attributes. Despite positive ratings, the lowest tier attributes of *Interpersonal Tact* and *Innovation* are deemed areas for development given their relative placement in the list and impact on perceived leader effectiveness, and subsequent findings regarding command climate and toxic leadership.

- *Innovation* and *Interpersonal Tact* have been consistently rated the least favorable leader attributes (though notably more favorable than even middle-tier competencies).
- Key strengths of Army leaders are *Gets Results* and *Prepares Self* for the competencies and demonstrating *The Army Values* and *Technical Knowledge* for the attributes.
- The lowest rated competency across years 2007-2010 is *Develops Others*. Overall, only 61% rate their superior effectively demonstrated this and less than half (48%) of recent graduates think that their most recent course effectively taught this. This has significant ramifications for future generations.

### ***Full Spectrum Operations***

CASAL findings indicate Army leaders are generally seen as effective in performing full spectrum operations. While it may appear there are differences between years, these differences are insignificant because only a small subsample answered these items both years. Army leaders deployed to OIF/OEF locations (i.e., Afghanistan, Iraq, Kuwait, elsewhere in SW Asia) that are in units or organizations with FSO responsibilities rate their immediate superiors as effective or very effective in demonstrating leadership in the following seven types of operations (2009 findings are shown in parentheses):

- Stability Operations – 75% (75%)
- Joint Operations – 73% (75%)
- Combating Terrorism – 72% (77%)
- Warfighting – 71% (78%)
- Counterinsurgency – 71% (72%)
- Civil Support – 66% (68%)
- Reconstruction Operations – 65% (71%)

### ***Culture and Extending Influence***

Effectiveness in FSO also relies on how well Army leaders interact with locals in deployed environments and how well they demonstrate an understanding of other cultures. CASAL findings indicate most Army leaders in these (deployed) environments view their immediate superior as effective or very effective in the following (2009 findings are shown in parentheses):

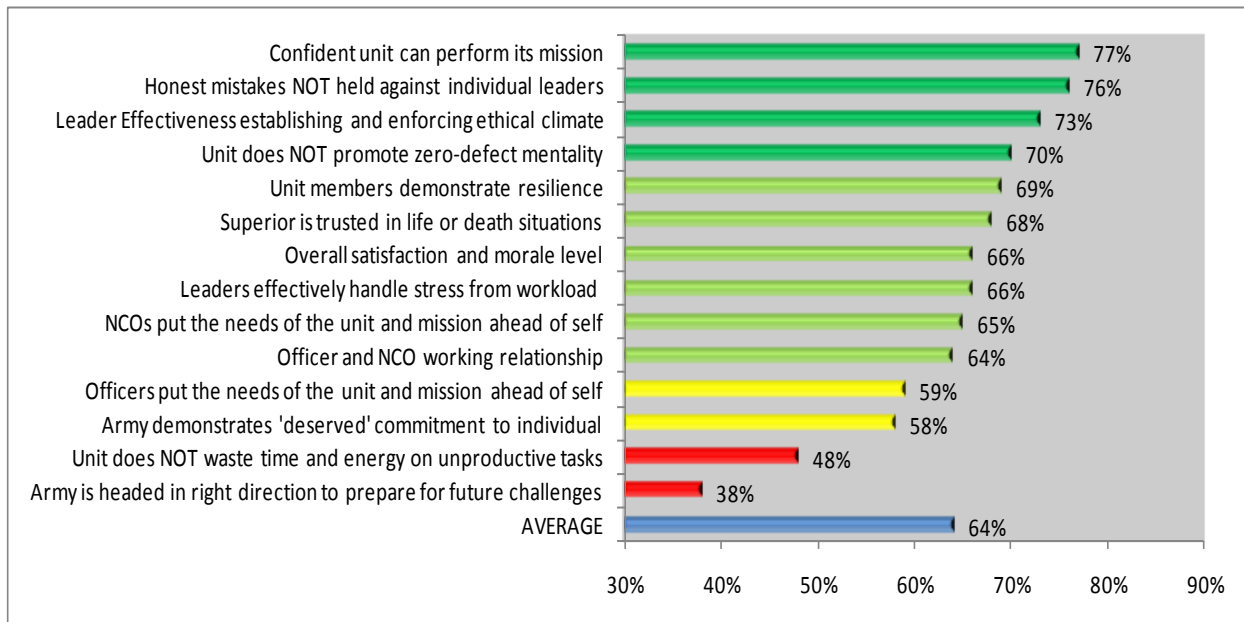
- Interacting with members of another culture – 72% (66%)
- Influencing others outside their chain of command – 64% (65%)
- Influencing members of another culture to do something – 63% (60%)

The overall favorability of interacting with members of another culture combined with the increase of 6% from last year may be indicative of progress in infusing culture curriculum into Army training and education. However, these results also indicate a potential skill gap for Army leaders with respect to influencing individuals from other cultures. The Army Culture and Foreign Language Strategy (ACFLS) highlighted cultural knowledge and learning outcomes to be achieved at different career stages for both officers and NCOs, starting with foundational interpersonal skills. Initial research with the ACFLS to specifically meet the cross-cultural demands required by complex operations has been promising (Abbe & Gallus, 2011). The key challenge is to go beyond language-skills and develop socio-cultural understanding, and cross-cultural negotiation skills.

### **Contribution of actions and character to leadership recommendations**

- Align selection, development, performance evaluation and feedback by using the common set of expectations for leaders from the Army Leadership Requirements Model. Based in part on earlier CASAL recommendations, the Army is in the process of updating the Officer Evaluation Report to align with the Leadership Requirements Model. The prescribed leader attributes and core competencies will be elements used to rate officer's performance. Raters and senior raters need to adopt the pending modification once approved and help implement it so that evaluations are honest and accurate otherwise there will be little improvement to the Army or to the evaluated individuals.
- Since 2007, the *Develops Others* competency has consistently been the greatest developmental need of Army leaders. This area is especially important because it will continually impact future generations of leaders. Better training and an Army-wide focus as well as unit-level focus is needed to address this issue. The mechanics of such an approach is described in the recommendations in the quality of leader development section.
- Extend and test applicability of ACFLS throughout the Army educational system to more fully address the scope of foundational socio-cultural skills necessary for successful cross-cultural influence and negotiation. This includes emphasizing non-regionally specific capabilities such as using cultural knowledge in planning and conduct of operations.

## EFFECTS OF CLIMATE AND SITUATIONAL FACTORS ON LEADERSHIP



As compared to the previous sections, this section is of greater concern. Many areas covered in this section fail to meet the 2/3 threshold. Generally speaking, the nature of the work isn't at issue, and overall, leaders see their units as effective. In fact, 60% of leaders think their unit outperforms similar units; and most (80%) believe that their knowledge, skills, and abilities are suited for the challenges of their work. The main issue in this area has to do with how the average leader sees the Army as a whole, and individual unit methods. In other words, getting results isn't a problem, but how the results are achieved and how individuals feel during the process *is* a problem. Note that this takeaway is consistent with the findings on the Leadership Requirements Model in which the highest rated competency is *Gets Results*, and the lowest rated attribute is *Personal Tact*. Of all uniformed survey respondents, only 38% (same as in 2006) agreed that, "The Army is headed in the right direction to prepare for the challenges of the next 10 years."

Leaders who did not agree that the Army is headed in the right direction (67% AC; 56% RC) were asked to select from a list of 14 options as to why they did not agree. The most frequently selected reasons by AC leaders are:

- Lack of discipline or "Army is too soft" – 65% (54% RC)
- Unable to retain quality leaders – 58% (51% RC)
- Senior leaders focus on the wrong priorities – 53% (49% RC)
- Long and frequent overseas deployments – 52% (41% RC)
- Junior leader promotions occurring too soon – 51% (41% RC)

The most pronounced differences were at cohort-level with only 35% (of those who already did NOT agree about right direction) of field grade officers selecting lack of discipline, which was less than half the rate of Jr NCOs (74%). TOE unit members were more likely to select lack of discipline than TDA members.

It should be noted that at least some of these perceptions have been substantiated elsewhere (F. Wenzel & G1/HRC Office, personal communication, May, 20, 2011). For example, first lieutenants on the 4,983-name Army Competitive Category captain list released April 6, 2010 can expect to be promoted upon reaching 37 months of active federal commissioned service. In the years before the war on terrorism, promotions to captain normally occurred at about four years of service. The promotion rate to captain is nearly 100% and the promotion rate of captain to major has increased from 80% in 2000 to about 92% in 2010. From 2001 through 2009, the percentage of officers receiving below-zone, or early promotions among all officers selected for advancement to major increased from 5% to 13.2%. Many agree that young officers are being promoted too fast, but that will remain a fact-of-life until there is a reduced need to file MTOE slots.

A 2011 report (Falk & Rogers) on junior officer retention challenges and opportunities reported that of the 250 former junior military officers surveyed who left service between 2001-2010:

- 80% reported that the best officers that they knew had left the military before serving a full career.
- The primary reason for their own separation was lack of organizational flexibility (i.e., frustrated with a one-size-fits-all system) that provided limited ability for one to control their own career.
- 60% reported OPTEMPO as an important consideration in leaving.
- Close to 85% said that the best officers would stay if the military offered better assignments to the best officers and promoted the best officers more quickly.

Theme analysis from 2006 respondents who disagreed that, "Army is headed in the right direction to prepare for the challenges of the next 10 years" indicated that discipline was relatively less of an issue than it is considered today. In 2006, lack of discipline was the 4th most frequent theme (compared to 2010 in which it was the most cited). Comments claimed the Army has become "soft" and discipline and respect are not instilled in new recruits. Some of the comments cited lowered entrance standards (e.g., physical fitness).

In addition to the statistics provided in this section's scorecard, just a little over half to less than half of the respondents felt that:

- Seeking help for stress-related problems is accepted and encouraged in their unit (56%)
- Leaders in their unit or organization help Soldiers handle combat stress (61%)
- The frank or free flow discussion of ideas is encouraged (59%)
- They felt informed of decisions that affect their work responsibilities (54%)
- The organization implements the good ideas suggested by subordinates (50%)

- When solving a problem, unit members identify actual root causes as opposed to applying a quick fix (49%)

All these indicators are important and these results are problematic, especially when considered in light of other large-scale Army issues (e.g., lack of confidence in the future of the Army).

### ***NCO-Officer Roles***

An important aspect of command climate is the degree to which an organization values its members, and only half of Army leaders (53%) agree that officers and NCOs are equally valued in their unit/organization, a finding that is driven heavily by lack of agreement by Jr NCOs (only 36% agree). Nearly one in five Army leaders (18%) believes a communication problem exists between officers and NCOs in their unit or organization. Of those who believe a communication problem exists, 42% characterize it as a 'serious problem' while 54% rate it as a 'moderate problem.' These ratings show little change from those observed in the 2009 CASAL exploratory survey (44% and 52%, respectively). The data indicate a root-cause of this issue is perceived lack of information sharing. Despite these sentiments, most Army leaders believe that both officers and NCOs in their unit/organization are willing to go beyond the leadership responsibilities as defined by their job descriptions, and that both officers and NCOs put the needs of the unit/organization and mission ahead of self. However, less than half of Jr NCOs agree with either of these points (49% and 44%, respectively). Unit leaders should first identify the importance and complementary-nature of subordinates' roles and positions and consistently demonstrate this understanding to unit members. Second, leaders should work to be aware of and understand faultlines, which divide unit members on the basis of some characteristic(s). These faultlines can splinter the unit, lead to conflict, reduce satisfaction, and negatively impact individual and unit performance (Jehn & Bezrukova, 2010). Third, the leader needs to breakdown these faultlines by focusing the unit on larger, superseding demands, and goals, and celebrating achievements across faultlines and throughout their organization.

### ***Toxic Leadership***<sup>3</sup>

Considering the indicators from the survey on organizational and unit climate, it is not surprising that there is a perceived problem with toxic leadership. Based on several leader-level and unit-level data points, it is estimated that roughly 1 in 5 leaders are viewed negatively:

- not putting unit needs ahead of their own (22%)
- seen as “a real jerk” (25%)
- do things and behave in a way that is positive for the organization and themselves, but negative for subordinates (18%)
- do things and behave in a way that is negative for the organization, themselves, and subordinates (5%)
- unit holding honest mistakes against them (21%)

On a 1-7 scale of how much of a problem these negative types of behaviors are only 11% selected 1 or 2 (13% in 2009) indicating few see this as not much of a problem of all, and 42% selected a 6 or 7 (57% in 2009) indicating that many perceive this as a serious problem. Eighty-three percent of Army leaders indicate that they have observed one or more leaders demonstrate negative leadership types of behaviors (e.g., over-controlling, narcissistic, self-promoting) in the past year, and 17% have observed five or more of these negative types of leaders.

There is no indication that the toxic leadership issue will correct itself. The data show that the offending leaders do not receive feedback that suggests that they need to improve their behavior. Unfortunately, feedback such as reduced individual productivity/effectiveness, confrontation, or hearing it from others is not occurring. In fact, toxic leaders accomplish their goals (66%) to a greater extent than constructive leaders (64%). Additionally, half (50%) of subordinates of a leader who does things and behaves in a way that is positive for the organization and individually, but negative for subordinates (i.e., toxic leader) expect that leader to achieve a higher level of leadership responsibility, and 18% say they emulate that (toxic) superior. This may create a self-perpetuating cycle with harmful and long-lasting effects on morale, productivity and retention of quality personnel.

This is not to say that there are not good leaders or even outstanding leaders too. While 83% said they directly observed a toxic leader last year, 97% reported observing an exceptional leader. The majority of subordinates (68%) are confident following their immediate superior into life-or-death situations, and 77% of leaders are seen as individuals who put the needs of the unit and mission ahead of themselves.

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<sup>3</sup> Toxic leadership is covered in greater depth in an additional CASAL report (CAL Technical Report 2011-3).

### ***Morale and Satisfaction***

More than three-fourths (79%) of Army leaders are satisfied with their career in the Army thus far. Leaders with longer tenure and those in the reserve component more often indicate satisfaction with their career in the Army. Over half of AC and RC leaders (52% and 60%, respectively) report that their current level of morale is high or very high, a finding that shows a slight decline since the 2009 CASAL (59% and 63%, respectively). In comparison to findings from 2009, the percentage of deployed leaders reporting high or very high morale has increased in Iraq (+7%), but decreased in Afghanistan (-4%).

<b>Active Duty Leaders Reporting High or Very High Morale</b>		
<b>Location</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>
CONUS	63%	55%
Afghanistan	47%	43%
Iraq	41%	48%

### ***Intentions to Remain in the Army***

While commitment to the Army has been consistently strong, many Soldiers feel that this commitment is not reciprocated. Forty-one percent of Army leaders agree (an additional 28% neutral) that, “The Army no longer demonstrates that it is committed to me as much as it expects me to be committed.” These perceptions about the Army’s level of commitment towards leaders are related to intentions to remain in the Army. Active duty leaders who disagree the Army no longer demonstrates commitment toward them more often indicate they plan to remain in the Army ( $r = -.24, p < .01$ ).

Of all Army leaders not currently eligible for retirement, two-thirds in the active component (66%) and three-fourths in the reserve component (78%) plan to stay in the Army until they are eligible for retirement or beyond 20 years (steady since 2005). The increase in the percentage of active duty captains who intend to remain in the Army until retirement observed in 2009 has held steady in 2010 at 47%. This cohort continues to show the greatest percentage of indecision about remaining in the Army. Their indecision about leaving the Army ranges from a high of 44% undecided in 2008 to 42% undecided in 2010.

<b>Percentage of leaders who intend to stay in the Army until retirement</b>		
<b>Year</b>	<b>AC</b>	<b>RC</b>
2005	65%	71%
2006	66%	70%
2007	65%	70%
2008	67%	73%
2009	70%	79%
<b>2010</b>	<b>66%</b>	<b>78%</b>



## Climate and situational factors on leadership recommendations

- Increase lieutenant education in BOLC on NCO roles and functions, ideally with instruction provided by NCOs, in order to reduce the gap between NCO-Officer perceptions (Experimentation and Analysis Element Division, 2010).
- Modify unit climate assessments so that they focus on components most useful to commanders, and extend the company commander climate survey requirement to the battalion level. “Nested climate surveys from battalion, brigade, and division would allow consistent checks on climate and give an opportunity for command initiative on climate” (Keller-Glaze et al., 2010, p. XII). Changes can include support and use of innovative problem-solving, interpersonal trust, and perceived leader toxicity.
- Evaluate and promote leaders based, in part, on their responsibility to foster and maintain a positive command climate. Focus on long-term success by recognizing legitimate concerns about subordinate input, applying a top-down approach, reinforcing chain of command responsibilities of providing feedback instead of relying on centralized selection boards, and minimizing the administrative load by leveraging web-based technology (Reed, 2004).
- Utilize the Army’s Multi-Source Assessment and Feedback (MSAF) program to give unit members a voice, and an opportunity to discuss leadership deficiencies in a safe, anonymous, and productive way. MSAF is widely used and has been well-received and is showing positive results (Dyrlund, 2009; Hinds & Steele, 2011; *see also leader development section*). The opportunity provided by MSAF is especially important given the low rate of those whom will confront, and the high prevalence of leaders perceived negatively by subordinates. Certainly, some toxic leaders (particularly many in the aggressive/mean-spirited category) may be uninterested in developmental feedback, but others may, for the first time, learn that their positive intentions or zealous actions are actually having counterproductive effects on their subordinates. It is also much easier for the leader to consider that a single assessor is biased or inaccurate, but it is much more difficult to be dismissive when there is recurring information provided by multiple assessors from each source (Steele & Garven, 2009).
- Leaders need to honestly self-assess their motivation and receive forthright feedback from others regarding their behaviors, and be aware of the extreme-side and downside of positive attributes. A Center for Army Leadership response was to create a handbook titled the *Developing Leadership During Unit Training Exercises*. This handbook provides trainer-to-counterpart observation and feedback techniques focused on positive leadership behaviors. The handbook was developed with sections on creating a climate for development (e.g., avoiding a zero-defect results only environment), observing and understanding leadership behaviors (consistent with FM 6-22), and delivering feedback to make an impact and facilitate learning.

## QUALITY OF LEADER DEVELOPMENT



The quality of leader development scorecard shows both strengths and weaknesses. Overall, operational experiences and self development are seen as strongly impacting leader development; however, development at the unit-level is perceived to be lacking.

### ***Leader Development Training Domains***

Army doctrine (FM 7-0) outlines the Army Leader Model, which specifies leader development is leveraged across three overlapping training domains: operational, self development, and institutional. Leaders must utilize and balance these three domains to become proficient across the Army Core Leader Competencies (FM 6-22). Army institutional education aims to provide something that the other domains rarely can – purposeful leader development that is closely aligned with doctrine, which results in a consistent experience.

For the past 3 years, over 80% of Army leaders have consistently rated both operational experience and self development as effectively preparing them to assume new levels of leadership or greater responsibility. It is worth pointing out that 65% of respondents agree that their organization *expects* them to engage in self development; while only 40% agree that their organization *makes time* for self development. The fact that Army leaders report significantly more learning occurring via operational experience and self development than through institutional training presents several challenges. These development experiences are not always purposeful, nor do they align with set standards. In short, education is based on an organized, time-tested and shared set of knowledge intended to generalize to many situations.

Capitalizing on operational experience requires feedback and careful planning, in order to ensure practice makes perfect, instead of practice reinforcing negatives or aligning with arbitrary goals and idiosyncratic leader desires.

Learning from superiors and peers through observation, job shadowing and collaboration are seen as effective and impactful methods of development in the Army. However, the more general practice of 'leader development from within my unit' is rated toward the bottom of a list of 13 leader development practices in terms of its positive impact on Army leaders. Only 40% of leaders indicate leader development from within their unit has had a large positive impact on their development. It is important to note that while leader development within the unit is not perceived to have a large impact by many leaders, less formal methods of development that occur within the unit/organization (including duty assignments/OJT, learning from peers, and learning from superiors) are among the highest rated in terms of their positive impact on development (64-77% 'large' or 'great' impact). The relative ordering and favorability of these development methods have remained stable over the past six years. The Army should continue to look for ways to leverage informal methods to develop leaders. Guidance such as CAL's Commander's Handbook to Unit Leader Development shows ways to set conditions so informal methods are supported and can have greater developmental value. Recording one's leadership experiences, challenges and lessons learned in a journal is a way of disciplining oneself to set aside time for reflection and growth.

#### ***Institutional Education***<sup>4</sup>

Operational experience (80% favorability) and self development (85% favorability) continue to be viewed as strong methods for developing Army leaders. Institutional education (58% favorability with a 9% increase from 2009) currently has few perceived strengths:

- timing, with the exception of Jr NCOs,
- quality of instructors (80% favorability, 5% increase from 2009),
- agreement (71% AC; 79% RC) that attendance at Army institutional courses is beneficial beyond meeting education requirements,
- the majority of individual leaders (67%) thinking that they are effective at applying what was learned.

Unfortunately, there are also many perceived weaknesses (the majority of which offset the aforementioned strengths). Too few (about 50%) company grade officers and Jr NCOs believe that they had sufficient opportunities to attend courses or schools. Too many Jr NCOs (40%) indicate that they attended their most recent course too late in their career.

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<sup>4</sup> A more in-depth review of Army education results has been released (CAL Technical Report 2011-2).

While about two-thirds think that they are effective at applying what was learned, less than one-half (48%) of graduates indicate their unit or organization is effective at utilizing or supporting the leadership skills they learned.

Similarly, while attendance is viewed as beneficial, only about half of AC leaders (52% AC; 63% RC) agree that instruction from Army institutional education has provided a foundation that helps them get more learning out of everyday experiences such as garrison and deployment operations. Of all AC recent graduates, about 19% think that current Army education/schools are so ineffective that the Army won't be prepared to meet future challenges.

While quality of instructors was high, only a slim majority (51%) thought that the course actually improved their leadership capabilities, and not even half believed that they were better prepared to influence others in their unit (49%), nor better prepared them to develop their subordinates (48%).

Colonels, Lieutenant Colonels and Chief Warrant 5s were also surveyed about what skills were lacking for recent graduates. The most common response was appropriate critical thinking and problem solving skills. Students who found their course ineffective were surveyed about potential improvements. The most common response was to make leadership a focus and cover specific leadership issues. About a third of the sample suggested improving course content by having focused instruction specific to leadership including basic leadership skills and specific leadership issues such as developing others and mentoring. Comments also suggested that courses should provide more hands-on experiences where leaders could lead others in the course, and that content needed to be updated to be relevant and match current operational settings.

Subordinate development continues to lag behind other methods of leader development. Less than two-thirds of all Army leaders (61%) rate their current immediate superior as effective in developing subordinates. One outcome of this is the perceived low level of preparedness of leaders who are promoted, especially at the lowest levels of leadership, which are critical. Findings from several survey items indicate this area shows room for improvement:

- *Develops Others* has consistently been the lowest rated core leader competency. Only 61% of Army leaders are rated as effective in developing their subordinates; 59% of Army leaders have rated their immediate superiors as effective in creating or calling attention to leader development opportunities in their assignment.
- In 2010, the percentage of leaders that report their unit/organization places a high/very high priority on leader development is at an all time low at 46% (compared to 53% in 2009; 55% in 2008).
- Only 57% of Army leaders believe that they have time to carry out the duties and responsibilities for developing their subordinates, down from 63% in 2009. Further, 30% of company grade officers and Jr NCOs disagree they have time to do this.
- 30% of Army leaders report that Army leaders in their unit/organization develop the leadership skills of their subordinates to a large or great extent.

Perceptions of unit-based pre-deployment training are generally favorable, especially with the preparation that occurs at CTC. Of those who have attended, 72% rate their CTC experiences as effective for improving their leadership skills, while 72% rate the leadership feedback received at the CTC as effective. Satisfaction and ratings of effectiveness for other unit-based collective training and leader preparation continues to be less than optimal (~63% favorability) and shows room for improvement.

### ***Multisource Assessment and Feedback (MSAF)***

This year was the first year that CASAL examined the MSAF Army-360 program in-depth. MSAF provides users a validated approach to garnering feedback from subordinates, superiors, and peers, and comparing that feedback to the leader's self-assessments on a variety of leadership behaviors based on the Army Leadership Requirements Model (FM 6-22). The MSAF program also provides coaching and a virtual improvement center with leadership instructional materials has been added. The MSAF Army-360 program is well received by those who participate, and its effectiveness is improved by increasing program engagement such as sharing results with others, and using the pool of trained coaches. Only slightly more than half (56%) of MSAF participants took full advantage of the program. A little more than half (60%) reported sharing their feedback with at least one other person, but only 38% discussed their results with an MSAF coach.

- 89% of participants concluded that MSAF had at least a small positive impact on their leadership development (72% moderate impact or greater)
  - 53% improvement to self-awareness
  - 47% improvement to readiness to learn
  - 46% improvement to leadership
  - 43% improvement to mission effectiveness

Of those who noted improvement in leadership from MSAF, 36% said that the results lasted more than a year.

## Leader development recommendations

- Create an organizational vision that makes leader development a priority in the unit. Research (Stam, Knippenberg, & Wisse, 2010) suggests that a vision explicitly involving subordinates is more likely to cause followers to align with the vision than visions not involving subordinates. This translates to a top-down promotion of an organizational priority for leader development in units, whereby commanders integrate leader development into their vision for the organization and as part of their measure of success.
- Once leaders have the motivation (encouraged through vision, mentoring, and performance reviews) to develop their subordinates, they need to have the tools/training to develop their subordinates. The schoolhouse is not meeting this demand. As a result, curricula should be improved in this area, and TSPs should be revised/developed in order to make sure that this process is as easy-as-possible for each leader. The Center for Army Leadership Commander's Handbook for Unit Leader Development provides tools and methods for leaders to use in making job assignments, and conducting developmental counseling. To further inculcate and implement leader development, the tenets of this handbook should be converted into TSPs and aligned with institutional, unit, and self development learning requirements at various phases of a leader's development in the Army.
- Capitalize on every day current demands as a vehicle for leader development. It is not just that the task at hand be accomplished, but that leaders ensure learning occurs during accomplishment. This conscious effort is necessary in order to address weaknesses early on that will eventually become magnified in theater. As this occurs, leaders must go beyond developing their subordinates and show them that they are being developed. Once leaders *exemplify* an attitude which exalts subordinate development, they can then use *self-promotion* (demonstrating competence and sharing accomplishments) to communicate with their subordinates in briefings, trainings, and during counseling the different developmental opportunities that are being provided to their subordinates. These two strategies resolve *inaccurate* perceptual deficiencies in subordinate development (i.e., a subordinate does not always realize when they are being developed), and also benefits the subordinates' learning by calling out or expressing that development is occurring and that they should be taking something away from the experience (Jones & Pittman, 1982). In short, leaders need to emphasize to the subordinate when their actions are intending to develop the subordinate.
- Obtain information on leader developments specifics including strong identification of what behaviors to develop, to what extent they must be developed (i.e., setting standards for success in both proficiency and mastery), how this development (i.e., self development, OTJ, schoolhouse) will occur, and when it will occur (i.e., before taking new position, after taking new position, based on levels of other skills, unique to branch, obtaining rank, etc.).
- Conduct a pilot program of selecting attendance method that is consistent with leader development principles and Soldier preference. Ratings of the effectiveness of the educational experience were similar among resident, distance, and blended methods, which suggests further emphasis on matching attendance method with Soldier choice and Army demand.

- Ensure engagement is occurring and that students are ready to learn. In order for students to be interested the content of the course must be perceived relevant and be up-to-date. Instructors could have a real impact by making sure that they teach enduring principles that are relevant to the demands leaders face in day-to-day activities and Army leadership requirements. Steele and Fullagar (2009) demonstrated a link between 3 primary course characteristics and student engagement, namely that students have clear roles and expectations, that instructors provide support for autonomy (a previously noted deficiency), and that instructors provide timely and high-quality feedback (a previously noted strength).
- Designate a field grade officer that is not part of the rating chain as a trained coach or mentor and to hold unit accountable for leader development. Candidates for this might be the S1, S3, or XO. This experienced and well-trained leader would be able to provide a seasoned perspective that is more developmentally-focused than the day-to-day guidance that a junior leader receives from their immediate superior. In addition, the mere designation would send a clear message that leader development is truly important.

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